WILL NEW YORK GIVE BOY OF 16 TO ELECTRIC CHAIR?

Jurors Who Convicted Paul Chapman, for Murder of Regensburgs Sign Petition Urging Clemency—His Own Story of Crime Frank and Unshaken

By Robert H. Rohde

HARRY REGENSBURG is dead and Sam Regensburg is dead. That can't be mended. In no way can Law be applied to bring them back.

Hughes Davis is dead, too—which is just as well. He had gone into the Regensburg home to steal, had stayed to kill and had killed wantonly. His life was forfeit. Had he lived through the rain of police bullets which found him in hiding near the scene of his crime, then he must all but inevitably have died by legal execution.

Harry Regensburg dead, Sam Regensburg dead, Hughes Davis dead; and now it is Paul Chapman's turn.

Paul Chapman is sixteen years old—and in the Death House. He is the youngest prisoner who ever has entered that steel-walled one-way corridor between here and the hereafter. His status is the condemned murderer's. His prospects are the condemned murderer's. An appeal has been taken for him. Beyond the appeal is the possibility of a new trial; beyond that possibility the Governor. But beyond all the door to the death chamber stands ajar.

Jurors Sign a Clemency Petition

The twelve men who convicted him think it is too much that Paul should die. Every one of them has signed a petition urging clemency. Herein is their final judgment. They may be jurors no longer, nevertheless they are the same dozen who heard and weighed all the evidence which the state was able to pile up against Paul.

What they did when they returned their verdict finding Paul guilty of murder in the first degree they are now only too anxious to see undone. Is it too late?

The "Society" whose will the Law aims to interpret is an abstract thing. More often than not the voice which speaks through the Law is the voice of a generation over whose graves centuries have rolled.

Will the actual "Society" of to-day—the men who vote and think and the women who always have thought and now may vote—countenance the execution of Paul Chapman?

Paul, as he sits in his cell in the Death House, is neither angel nor devil. He is just a boy, sixteen years old, and, calamitously for himself, "big for his age." With a man's physique to carry him through, he had tasted something of a man's experiences before he came to the moment of temptation. Of his stature and his minor adventures in life the state made much. They were put into issue against his age in proof of his accountability.

But Paul Chapman is only sixteen years old. The brain which directs the body that has outraced it is a sixteen-year-old brain. That the jury, reconsidering, has come to realize. The hue and cry has subsided long since and there has been time, all around, for reflection. Directly as a result of the fate which confronts Paul a bill passed the Assembly at the last session of the Legislature providing that only men past twenty-one may be required to pay the death penalty. The bill was lost in the confusion of the last three days in the Senate, so that, as concerns Paul Chapman, the legislation inspired by his plight is a hint to the Governor, and nothing more—a suggestion of "Society's" will in regard to Paul.

The Story As Paul Told It

Now, aside from the question of Paul Chapman's age—if for a single moment it is possible to explore into the facts and forego that question—there is certainly another as to the measure of his guilt.

At the trial expert had faced expert and the wise men had disagreed. One set was sure that some of the bullets which had been fired had come from the automatic pistol carried by Chapman. Another set, equally learned in the use of firearms, had testified it wasn't so. Paul, retelling his own story on the witness stand—exactly as he had told it again and again on the day of his arrest—had asserted he had abandoned the crime before ever the shooting started.

"I was in it, and I ought to be punished; but I backed out short of murder and I shouldn't be killed"—that was the gist of his narrative, and that was his plea.

It wasn't apparently just a matter of words, nor of playing for effect. What Paul Chapman said he seemed sincerely to believe. He felt that punishment, and severe punishment, was his due. He had said as much to Matthew Wood, his lawyer, and Wood at his suggestion had proposed to District Attorney Lewis of Kings that his boy client be permitted to plead guilty to second degree murder. The sentence then could not have been less than a twenty year term. It might have been imprisonment for life.

The prosecutor was rather confident then that he could prove Paul was on the firing line with Hughes Davis when the Regensburg brothers awoke to find burglars at their elbows. To convict, he didn't have to prove that. It is the Law that one who joins in the plotting of a crime is equally guilty, if murder grows out of it, with the murderer. It is not even necessary to conviction that the co-plotter of the first part be present during the commission of the crime. He may be sixteen years old or sixty—the same law applies. He may indeed, be no more than seven, and the law will call him killer.

Put On As His Own Witness

It was this technicality in the law which menaced Paul Chapman. Wood found another technicality to serve as a foundation of the defence. For the law allows opportunity for repentance. Let a transgressor weaken in his criminal resolve and turn his back upon the crime in contemplation; from that instant he is clothed with innocence. Let him be frightened away from a crime and kill a policeman, say, in his flight—it is written then that it was not in pursuance of a criminal act he did the killing. It is all highly technical.

Anyhow, Wood decided to put Paul on the stand. Satisfied the boy had been telling the truth right along and would tell it again in the same straightforward manner, the lawyer called him as his own witness. When Paul was sworn the main facts in the case had been established. For that matter they were conceded.

There was no disputing that the murdered Regensburgs had been decent and peaceable citizens, and for their taking off there was no excuse. Harry Regensburg, years before, had opened a little stationery store at 636 Park Place, Brooklyn. He and his wife had moderately prospered there, and there a son was born.

On the night of Sunday, October 28, 1917, the Regensburgs had about $400 on the premises, hidden in divers parcels in the shop and the living rooms to the rear. They weren't expecting burglars; the precautions were routine.

Sam Regensburg, Harry's brother, had been a visitor that evening. He helped in the store until it was closed at 11 o'clock and then accepted his relatives' invitation to spend the rest of the night with them.

At 11:30 Harry Regensburg, his wife, his four-year-old son and his brother were all in bed and asleep. An hour later Sam Regensburg, sleeping with his small nephew curled to him, awoke with a start. The window beside his bed was wide open. He rose on his elbow to meet a blow from a blackjack or jimmy. There was a heavy odor of chloroform in the place. Sam struggled to his feet, screaming.

The Woman Only Survived the Crime

Harry Regensburg, half awake, came running from the next room. He never knew what hit him. As he appeared in the doorway, a white target in the blackness, a spatter of lead eliminated him as a combat factor—also as a factor in the Park Place cigar, cigarette and stationery trade. His wife, following him through the door a moment later, was hit by several bullets of the fusillade which greeted her. She was a red-haired woman. With wounds that ordinarily would have been mortal she kept her feet, ran to the front door through the store and gave the alarm by breaking the glass, collected the $400 from its several hiding places, told the first policemen to arrive what she knew of what had happened, and finally insisted on walking unaided to the ambulance which had been called for her. And she is alive to-day, a widow. She still runs the stationery store in Park Place and lives in the rooms behind it. There are bars on the windows now.

But Harry Regensburg and Sam Regensburg had received their death wounds. Before the end each had spells of consciousness, but if the police had been forced to rely on what the dying Regensburgs could tell there would have been scant hope of bringing the murderer to book.

Eyewitness testimony, however, was not necessary to make it plain that the windows opening on the back yard had been used to enter the Regensburg home and again to escape from it. Detectives climbed into the yard. A couple of them started over the fences. Others found a cellar door open and stumbled down the precipitous steps—stumbled straight onto what they were seeking.

In the dumbwaiter shaft an unnatural commotion had arisen. Somewhere above a tenant had reached out into the shaft and caught the rope and was holding on for dear life. The dumbwaiter was stuck between two floors. Aboard it was a passenger. The policemen, achieving a vantage point over his head, called on the passenger to explain himself. No answer came from the dark figure below. Threats to shoot were likewise ignored. And then the detectives turned loose.

Hughes Davis, immediately recognized as a one time tenant in the Park Place apartment house, was dying when he was lifted out of the shaft. Naturally he couldn't have much to say then; but a notebook found in his pocket talked for him. In the book were names and addresses of several boys. Paul Chapman's was among them.

He Was Ready To Tell the Story

Paul was arrested the next morning. By refusing to admit his complicity he might have saved himself then and there. Not a bit of evidence stood against him except that of the notebook. He was acquainted with Hughes Davis—that was all.

Getting Paul to talk, though, was no difficult task. He seemed glad of an opportunity to free his mind of what he knew. He was visibly frightened, but his answers were quick and specific. To this day the detectives who questioned him express no doubt that he was telling not only the general truth, but straight fact in every detail.

At least three times during the day Paul told his story to the police and to District Attorney Lewis, on the scene of the crime, in Captain Coughlin's office at the Sixth Branch Detective Bureau and in Lewis's office. He told it undeviatingly. On obscure points he was as certain and unchangeable as on major points. Wherever it was possible the police checked up on him, even while he was still under examination. Wherever they checked up they found corroboration. The story stands. It was on the case against himself which Paul then disclosed that the prosecution was based, and those same statements were taken as a bulwark of the defence.

Paul didn't attempt to justify himself. He was beyond quibbling. He had gone with Hughes Davis and Leonidas Davis, he said, to rob the Regensburgs. It wasn't his plan, nor did he expect any larger return from the adventure than the price of a suit of clothes. But he needed new clothes and he had gone along.

Two automatic pistols had been found on the roof of 636 Park Place. Although there was nothing to prove Paul carried one of them he unhesitatingly admitted it. The pistol wasn't his, and it wasn't even to have been carried by him, he said. But the plans had been changed and he had taken the gun. He said he hadn't intended to use it, wouldn't have known how to use it, anyhow, and hadn't used it.

Paul Not Shaken By Examination

As concerned his own part in the tragedy Paul was not to be shaken under the most rigorous cross-examination.

Hughes Davis, he said, had been a school friend. He was three years older than Paul, but the two had had the same playmates. Hughes had gone to work while Paul was still floundering along with his elementary studies and for years thereafter they had seen little or nothing of each other.

Then Paul, back from a sortie into the world on his own hook—in the course of which he had penetrated as far into the Wild West as Akron, Ohio—had run across his former chum. Hughes had changed. In school, despite the disparity in their ages, Paul had been the leader. He was "big for his age" even then, and chunkily built. He excelled in athletics. Hughes had been a frail youngster. Unfitted to compete with his fellows in their games, he had abandoned himself to the gay life. When he wasn't smoking a cigarette there was usually the ghost of one pendant from the corner of his mouth; and if there had been a school prize for picturesque swearing it would have been his without opposition.

Hughes had learned to play poker, and he passed on his knowledge to the gang. Self-taught, he had become an expert picker of locks. He found solid satisfaction in demonstrating his skill on any old lock that came to hand with a set of mysterious, home-made tools. In his field he was supreme and much admired. Elsewhere Paul was his protector.

This new Hughes Davis that Paul Chapman met when he returned from his travels was a man of the world. He wore rubber-rimmed spectacles and was rather fussy in regard to cigarette brands. Upon him the glamour of gasolene reflected. He worked in a garage—not as a mechanic, you may be sure, but as a stenographer and typist and general office man. He seemed to have plenty of money and he hinted to Paul he knew where to get plenty more.

The Lure Held Out to Him

Paul was in desperate straits—in what way will be developed further on. He needed clothing and was bound to have it. Readily he fell in with Hughes's suggestion that the two collaborate for profit. Paul didn't have the stamina which keeps many a poor boy from making a bad thing worse—for which an explanation is coming. He was willing to go wrong. In fairness that must here be conceded, as Paul conceded it in his confession.

Just before the Regensburg murder Hughes Davis had planned another "job." He and another boy went into a hardware store in the Bedford section of Brooklyn, leaving Paul posted across the street. When the others returned, as Paul said, he learned for the first time they had contemplated robbery. They had known the brooms were kept in the cellar and while the proprietor of the store was getting one for them it had been the scheme to rifle the cash register. It might have worked—but the hardware man had company.

That was Paul's introduction to the source of Hughes's easy money. It was good and sufficient warning that Hughes Davis wasn't square and a preparation for what happened subsequently.

On the following Sunday evening Paul met Hughes in a Brooklyn poolroom by appointment. Hughes said he thought he saw a way to make a little money for an old friend—one, say, who needed a new suit and had no means of getting it. He wasn't sure. He just thought he could help out. The final decision rested with others than himself.

As it developed there was only one other to be consulted. That was Leonidas Davis, Hughey's 23-year-old brother. Leonidas was married and lived in Providence, R. I. That evening he had popped up unexpectedly in Brooklyn. Together Hughey, Leonidas and Paul sallied forth. They rode on the Brighton L and Hughey left Leonidas and Paul waiting on a station platform while he took himself off on an errand. He had expected to bring back another boy, with whom the ultimate decision should rest in regard to Paul. The fourth boy, under parental restraint, couldn't join the expedition; but Hughey brought back with him various paraphernalia of crime which, Paul understood, had been stored with the stay-at-home.

By that time Hughey had upon his person two automatic pistols, rubber gloves to shield tell-tale finger tips, a jimmy, a black-jack.

Paul said—always has said—he began to lose his nerve right there. He didn't like the look of the pistols. Plain stealing was another matter. This array of deadly weapons looked altogether too desperate.

But the fact is that Paul didn't then and there back out of the party. The suggestion from Hughey that he was "yellow" and a "quitter" was sufficient to steel him. He went ahead. Moreover he was persuaded to carry one of the pistols. Hughey and Leonidas were to have been the armed men of the expedition, according to Paul's story, and Paul's share in the enterprise was to have been to serve as outside lookout. He was to stand in the street and at the approach of a policeman to signal to Leonidas, who was to have been posted at the back door of a shop which afforded a clear line of vision through from the sidewalk. Then Leonidas was to have passed on the warning to his brother.

It seemed, though, that Hughey had no mind to let Paul earn his suit of clothes so easily. First he called it to Paul's attention that Leonidas had a wife and baby. It wouldn't do, if anything went wrong, for him to be found with a pistol in his possession. Better to have the bachelors take a chance. Couldn't Paul, as a man and a bachelor, see that? Paul could. Reluctant or not, nevertheless he took the gun and stowed it in his coat pocket.

In the Matter of Buying Chloroform

Then there was chloroform to be bought. That task, too, Hughey put up to Paul. He and Leonidas were well known in the neighborhood, he argued, and the cunning trick would be for a total stranger to make the purchase. And for another thing: Wasn't it Paul who was all the time objecting to rough stuff and threatening to back out if the pistols or the blackjack were going to be used? Well, wasn't chloroform a concession to him, then? That wouldn't hurt anybody—just make 'em sleep sounder.

So Hughey temporarily took charge of Paul's pistol and Paul canvassed the drug stores of the neighborhood for chloroform. In the first store he was shrewdly questioned. He withdrew in disorder. Farther on he found druggists who were not so curious. They filled his orders without question until Hughey thought there was enough chloroform on hand for the night's business.

As a matter of fact it was only chloroform liniment which had been sold to Paul. Uneasy the slumber of him under whose nose it were held. Indeed, it was Hughey's effort to induce a state of artificial repose in him which awoke Sam Regensburg. Hughey had run up the window by Regensburg's bed and was waving a rag saturated with the stuff under the victim's nose. The chloroform liniment might have been so much ammonia. Regensburg stirred and Hughey, thinking the stir was his last for hours, crawled through the window and across the bed.

To make certain he wouldn't have Regensburg on his hands prematurely, Hughey held the rag to his nostrils again. It was too much for him this time. Regensburg's eyes opened. He saw the dark figure bending over him and started to climb out of bed. Hughey raized his blackjack—and in that instant lost an accomplice.

Of course this is all Paul Chapman's story. No witnesses survive to corroborate or contradict him. But the police have no reason to doubt that Paul told the truth here as he did everywhere else.

Protecting A "Family Man"

As Hughey moved to strike Paul says he was seized with panic. For there had been another change of plans to which Hughey had won his agreement through the old argument that Leonidas was a "family man" and it was Paul who at the last moment had been assigned to act as the lookout in the yard. Leonidas, as Paul's story has it, was in the street and comparatively safe. (As after events proved he was all but absolutely safe.)

Paul resolutely denies he stayed long enough outside the Regensburg window even to see Hughey's blow fall. It had been in the compact there would be no violence. By Paul's lightning reasoning the partnership was dissolved when Hughey lifted his arm. Thereupon Paul was through. As his story continues he turned and fled into the cellar, lost his way in the darkness, bumped his head and tumbled while searching for the stairs into the building and at last groped his way back into the yard, there to meet Hughes Davis.

Hughey had a flash lamp. He was at the top of cellar steps when Paul rejoined him and fairly flew down, his light twinkling. Paul followed. In the glow of the flash lamp the other stairs were quickly located.

As Paul reached the first floor hall at Hughey's heels he saw a shadow flit past the front door. He took it to be a policeman's shadow and raced blindly on upstairs. When he paused for breath he and Hughey were on the roof together. But by way of the roof there was no escape. No. 636 Park Place is an "island block."

At Hughey's suggestion Paul threw away his pistol. Hughey did likewise. Then he slipped onto the dumbwaiter. There was only room for one. If two trips must be made, Hughey would go first—he was that kind of leader.

Paul didn't wait for the dumbwaiter to descend and come back to him. He started down the stairs. Half way to the street he met a man.

"Goin' down to see what's the matter," Paul panted, and the man was satisfied.

Getting Away From the Scene

Nobody questioned Paul when he walked out the front door. For a few minutes he stood in the scantily attired crowd on the sidewalk. Leisurely then he strolled away. Between the crowd and the "L" station for which he was heading he met a policeman.

"Guess you're needed back there," Paul blandly informed him. "There's been a robbery."

And at that moment, Paul insists, he didn't know a crime graver than robbery had been committed.

An "L" train carried Paul safely away from Park Place. He snatched a little sleep on a station bench and in the morning resumed his search for work.

PAUL CHAPMAN AND HIS MOTHER

Brooklyn Women's Club and Other Organizations Circularize Governor in Youth's Behalf—Record Shows Generous Spirit in the Grip of Wanderlust

His first stop of the day had been arranged in advance; and some very fine police work had been done while he slept. When Paul arrived to keep his appointment detectives were on hand to receive him. A few minutes later they were listening to his confession of complicity.

Manifestly surprised when told that murder had been done, Paul at once denied he had used his pistol. The two guns found on the roof were put before him and he picked out the one he had carried. There were seven cartridges in the magazine, which might have held nine. In the magazine of the second pistol two cartridges were left. Ten might have been squeezed into it.

The fact that two cartridges were missing out of the pistol which Paul admitted having carried might have meant much. Again it might have meant little. By the closest police calculation just eight shots had been fired. Eight empty shells to correspond had been found scattered about the rooms behind the Regensburg store. While Hughey's pistol was technically a nine-shooter, there might have been ten cartridges in it when he cut loose. They would have been a tight fit, but the pistol would have held them and discharged them. Ten cartridges to start with, minus the two that were left—eight fired. Eight shots fired from Hughey's gun and eight cartridges found where they had fallen from the ejector; it tallied.

When Pistol Experts Clash

The pistol which had been intrusted to Paul Chapman might never have been loaded to capacity. For sure it hadn't been if his story is true—and don't forget the police believe he tells the whole truth. But supposing it had been: It was a nine-shooter, too, and only seven cartridges were left in its magazine. Two were missing then, making with the seven gone from Hughey's pistol a total of nine shots fired. If nine shots were fired, how had the ninth bullet managed to disappear without trace? What might have happened, then, to the ninth empty shell?

If Paul is truthful the answer to the problem is simple enough; if he be a liar behold the complications!

As has been said, District Attorney Lewis had an expert at the trial to testify that one of the bullets which were fired and which took effect came from Paul's pistol. As has further been said, experts of the defence were quite as positive it hadn't.

And as has been said beyond, it didn't make much difference anyway. The Law is the Law, and Paul's own confession damned him. Accepted in part, that is, it damned him. Accepted in full, there was his panicky repentance and his abandonment of the crime to consider.

For four days the trial went on. Then, after a summing up by the state, Judge Kapper charged the jury they must either find Paul Chapman guilty as charged—guilty of first degree murder and subject to the death penalty—or they must acquit. The jury began its deliberations imbued with the idea that there could be no compromise.

In the petition which the jury now have signed (again in solid 12-0 agreement) they refer to the strictness of Judge Kapper's charge. This charge, incidentally, is one of the grounds on which Mr. Wood intends to base his appeal. He believes much more should properly have been left to the discretion of the jury.

The Trial and Public Indignation

At the time, however, the verdict was not unpopular. Indignation had run high, for the killing of the Regensburgs had been as senseless as brutal. Other ways of escape had been open to the burglar—or the burglars—than by murder. Public opinion was against Paul. He was overgrown, loutish. He sat through his trial apparently unmoved. Mr. Wood, who was at his side through every minute of the ordeal, says Paul was frozen with fright.

But the reporters in the courtroom didn't know that. They saw in the boy's glum demeanor stoicism, indifference. So they wrote of him.

Others who followed the trial—women, mostly—formed their own impressions. They remembered Paul's age, and upon his conviction set actively to save him from the chair. The Brooklyn Woman's Club started the fight. Organizations by the score and individuals by the thousand took it up. Petitions began to circulate; petitions are circulating yet; all will find their way to Albany.

These disinterested workers in Paul Chapman's behalf have made it their business to find out more about Paul and the case against him than the newspapers found space to tell.

Justice Kapper saw no reason why Paul should not die, and he fixed the first week of April last for his execution. Paul is alive to-day only by virtue of the appeal taken by his lawyer, which automatically acts as a stay.

But by the verdict of those who have acquainted themselves with all the circumstances—a good many of them circumstances of which the law takes no consideration, weighty though they may be—there is every reason in the world why Paul should live. For one thing, certainly, killing Paul will make a bad business no better, they assert. In no way can his execution be a benefit to the widows and the fatherless children left by Harry Regensburg and Sam.

Rather than a bad boy, Paul Chapman has been an unfortunate boy. He is the son of a trebly unfortunate mother, a woman so schooled to catastrophe that the situation of Paul in the shadow of the chair is but an added chapter in a book already written full of troubles.

The Story of His Mother's Life

About all that Paul Chapman ever got without working for it was an endowment of good health. He was born with that. The strength that had been denied to his father and the sturdiness that his older brother Harold lacked seemed to have reverted to him when finally he came into the world. As a baby he was a perilous climber. As a growing child in knickerbockers he was precocious and hardy. He was the kind of boy who must be active to keep himself amused. Men of deeds develop from that type of boy.

But Paul had started life on the wrong foot—which brings to bear the story of his mother's life.

As a girl Mrs. Chapman (she has married a second time, but no need of using the new name) was Louise Long, and she lived in a country town in Illinois. Her father died when she was only a few months old. When she was sixteen her mother died. Until she was eighteen she lived with an uncle in Springfield, Ill. Then, with a small estate left by her grandfather to back her, she went to Chicago. For a short time she went to a "business college." Before she was nineteen she had met Charles Chapman, a railroad clerk, and had accepted his offer of marriage.

Chapman was many years older than his bride and was father to her as well as husband. For years things ran smoothly. A son was born and then another, five years later. The second son was Paul.

In the railroad office Chapman shared a double desk with a clerk who was consumptive. The two used the same telephone and through it the germs passed from one to the other. Never robust, Chapman fell an easy victim. For a year he was a dependent on his wife. Part of the year the family spent in Arizona; the rest in Canada. In its course what was left of Mrs. Chapman's inheritance was spent. At its end Chapman died.

One of Mrs. Chapman's four brothers, a floor-walker in a New York department store, travelled to Canada to attend the funeral. He proposed that his sister return with him to New York and furnish a flat, volunteering to live with her and maintain the home.

Mrs. Chapman came to New York. The flat was rented and furnished out of her small stock of insurance money. This was six years ago, when Paul was ten and Harold, his brother, was fifteen. For a time again things went well. The brother kept his end of the bargain. Then, one day, he told Mrs. Chapman he had found the right girl and was going to marry her. The next day Mrs. Chapman found work in a department store. From that time on, she suspected, it would be up to her to keep the family together.

The first job paid $15 a week, and it was about as good a job as Mrs. Chapman has ever found since. In the year before her brother married the woman of his choice she contrived to save a little money.

That money wasn't to stay long in the bank. Harold Chapman, always sickly, was stricken with the disease that had carried off his father. He had been employed for a couple of years as runner in a broker's office, and for a period the firm continued his pay. Eventually, with the boy in a sanatorium at Liberty, N. Y., the burden fell on the mother.

Then He Was Left to Himself

Harold died, and was buried at Liberty. What spare time Mrs. Chapman had she had spent with him, and Paul, perforce, had been permitted to run wild. He didn't become wicked—just wild. He conceived a dislike for school and study. There were pleasanter things to do with his time, he discovered, than to sit in a classroom.

Mrs. Chapman has called herself a "half-time mother." That is an overestimate. She didn't have time enough to herself for half-time motherhood. From early morning until evening her work kept her away from her home. Paul, who had been tremendously fond of his brother and had been restrained by him, was his own master. He might go to school or not as he pleased. When his numerous absences showed on the report cards a scolding was the worst that could happen to him. His mother didn't believe in corporal punishment.

Left to himself Paul became lazy, shiftless—but not bad. Just once he got into trouble, when he and other youngsters threw stones at a passing train.

Perhaps as much to put a stronger general manager over Paul as for any other reason, Mrs. Chapman married again. Her second husband was younger than she. He was a man with some material prospects, but one who neither at that time nor now had a sufficient earning capacity to meet all the bills.

Mrs. Chapman kept on working. And Paul continued to do largely as he pleased.

Once again Paul got into trouble—such trouble as a good many successful men have had in their boyhood and have lived to laugh over. A truant officer visited his mother one evening. In the preceding month, as he demonstrated, Paul had skipped a scandalous number of days at school.

As a result of the truant officer's visit Paul was given his choice of attending school regularly or quitting altogether. Even before then he had wanted to get a job. Soon afterward the summer vacation came, and for months he tried one job after another. None suited him. He wanted outdoor work, and such work he couldn't find in New York.

He went back to school again in the fall, was as discontented as ever and in December persuaded his mother to let him strike out for himself. She put him aboard a train bound for Bridgeport, Conn., with a ticket in his hand and $15 in his pocket. He was only fifteen then, but the mother contented herself with the thought he was man-size.

In the Grip of the Wanderlust

Bridgeport didn't look as good to Paul close up as it had looked from a distance. He stayed there only an hour and a half, sent a telegram to his mother and struck for Philadelphia. There he worked a while for an express company as a husky and then moved on to the du Pont plant at Carney's Point, N. J., opposite Wilmington, Del.

The letters Paul wrote to his mother from Philadelphia and Carney's Point were good manly letters. Any mother might be proud of them. He was making his way in the world and was satisfied with life. A good share of the time he made his home in Y. M. C. A. dormitories.

After several months the wanderlust renewed his grip. The trace of it is in the letters to "Dearest Mother." Sometimes Paul wrote of plans to travel on to the Pacific Coast; again to ship for Europe. When he actually did weigh anchor Paul came to port at Camp Meade in Delaware. From there he went to Akron, from Akron to Cleveland, from Cleveland to Dunkirk, N. Y., where he worked for a time in a vineyard; from Dunkirk to Jamestown, and so on home.

So long as he had been regularly employed Paul's letters to his mother were regular. Two or three of them reached her every week. After he left Carney's Point jobs were harder to get. Occasional postcards took the place of the letters.

It was rough sledding for Paul in Ohio, and rougher on the way East once he had resolved to get back home. Mostly he journeyed on freight trains and when he reached New York his clothing was in tatters.

October 19, 1917, was the date of Paul's return. That was his sixteenth birthday. For all his rags and his grime his mother took him literally to her breast.

Paul's stepfather gave him an old suit, and a hat and a pair of shoes were bought to fill out his temporary wardrobe. It wasn't exactly the outfit that Paul would have picked to wear on a canvass for work, and when he found it hard to get a job he laid the difficulty to his clothing. He wanted another suit, wanted it badly—and along came Hughey Davis.

Leonidas Davis Goes Scot Free

There is Paul Chapman's story. And in what degree was Paul Chapman's guilt greater than the guilt of Leonidas Davis?

Leonidas was tried after Paul's case had been disposed of. The police had found Hughey's brother in bed when they reached his home, but they had wrung a confession from him. Paul Chapman would have testified, had he been brought down from the Death House as a witness, that Leonidas had been standing watch outside the Regensburg store no more than twenty minutes before the shooting. That must have threatened the alibi supplied by the defendant's mother and stepfather, who testified Leonidas was home and in bed at that time. Then there was another potential witness, Mrs. Agnes Powers, who was not called. Mrs. Powers, a neighbor of the Regensburgs, says she saw two boys run from the entrance hall at 636 Park Place shortly after the shooting, one of whom disappeared around the corner while the second darted back into the building. Neither of the pair, she is sure, was Paul; so the inference to be drawn from her story is that the boy who returned into the house was Hughey, and his companion a third participant.

District Attorney Lewis did not appear personally in the prosecution of Leonidas Davis, and in general the state did not seem to prosecute with nearly so much vigor as in the trial of Paul.

It was Justice Cropsey, Mr. Lewis' predecessor as District Attorney in Kings, before whom young Davis was tried. In public speeches the justice had more than once upheld the conviction of Paul Chapman, yet when it came time for him to charge the jury with whom the fate of Leonidas Davis rested he pointed out they might convict on several lesser counts than first degree murder.

Notwithstanding that the verdict was "not guilty." Straightway other indictments pending against Davis were quashed. He is scot free. He never can be tried again.

What the Public Thinks of the Chapman Case

A dozen letters to The Tribune voicing public opinion on the case of Paul Chapman appear on Page 1, Section VI., of this issue. These letters were written in response to a brief article published some weeks ago, and it is in response to a demand for fuller information on the subject that the above article is printed.